

RAFFINGTON HAD BEEN A NICE PLACE TO LIVE UNTIL THE STRANGER REVEALED HIS TRUE IDENTITY!  
THEN SOON EVIL THINGS BEFELL THE PEACEFUL TOWN, AND THERE WAS A WARNING CRY...

# BEWARE... A MARTIAN



IT'S MR. NARDO, THE HERMIT THAT'S BEEN LIVING IN THE SHACK AT THE EDGE OF TOWN! WHAT IN THE WORLD CAN HE HAVE TO SAY?

FOR A YEAR I'VE BEEN LIVING AMONG YOU GOOD PEOPLE OF RAFFINGTON! I'VE LEARNED YOUR LANGUAGE, LEARNED TO LIKE YOU... I WANT TO LIVE AMONG YOU AS I REALLY AM, NOT AS A HERMIT...

NARDO'S WORDS ALONE WOULD HAVE BAFFLED HIS LISTENERS AT THE TOWN HALL, BUT THE CHANGE THAT CAME OVER HIM MADE WHAT THEIR EYES BEHELD SEEM LIKE A TRICK OF THEIR IMAGINATION...

A CRESCENDO OF ASTONISHED MURMURS FILLED THE HALL, AND THEN THE AUDIENCE FELL INTO A DEATHLY HUSH...

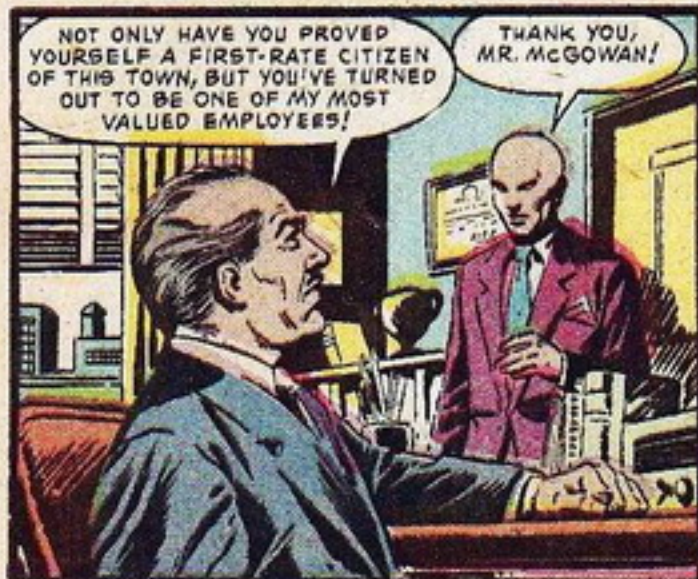


... BUT AS A BEING FROM ANOTHER PLANET! ... FOR I'VE COME HERE FROM WAR-TORN MARS TO FIND PEACE ON EARTH!



I SEE FEAR ON MANY FACES! I UNDERSTAND IT! BELIEVE ME, I ASK ONLY FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE AMONG YOU AS A FRIEND!

IN MAY, 1968, JUST TWO WEEKS AFTER REVEALING HIS IDENTITY, NARDO GOT A JOB WITH THE MANUFACTURING FIRM OF R.R. MCGOWAN & CO... AND A MONTH LATER...



NOT EVERYBODY WAS PLEASED WITH THE MARTIAN'S SPECTACULAR SUCCESS...



YOU WON'T THINK IT'S SO FUNNY LATER! MARK MY WORDS, ED! ANYHOW, YOU'VE BEEN HERE AS LONG AS I... SIX YEARS! YOU LIKE WORKING FOR AN ALIEN CREATURE WHO'S BEEN HERE A MATTER OF WEEKS?



HORACE VAIL, IN HIS UNREASONABLE JEALOUSY OF THE MAN FROM MARS, DID NOT SHOUT HIS WARNING... HE FOUND A MORE VICIOUS WAY TO HARM NARDO...



A HALF-HOUR LATER, SHERIFF JOHN LESTER VISITED THE MARTIAN AT HIS HOME IN TOWN...



CAN YOU PROVE YOU'VE BEEN HOME ALL EVENING, NARDO?

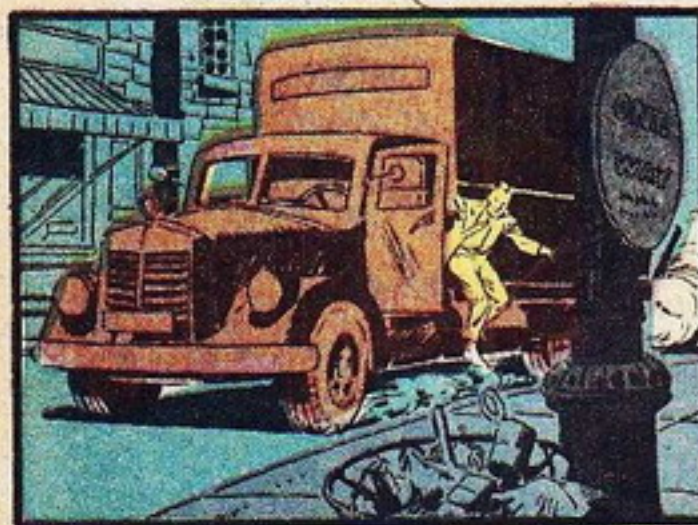
UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T, SHERIFF! OF COURSE, IT'S **NOT TRUE** THAT I SET FIRE TO THE WAREHOUSE!



YOUR WORD IS GOOD, NARDO! I'M NOT GOING TO ARREST YOU... BUT HAVE A CARE! IF THAT FIRE **WAS** YOUR WORK, WE'LL FIND OUT EVENTUALLY! IF NOT, WELL, YOU'VE GOT AN ENEMY THAT BEARS WATCHING!

HORACE VAIL HAD ONLY BEGUN HIS ATTACK ON THE CHARACTER OF THE MARTIAN! ONE NIGHT HE RELEASED THE BRAKES OF A TRUCK...

LATER, HE MADE SURE THAT SUSPICION FELL WHERE HE WANTED IT TO...



NOT ONLY WAS MY BRAKE ON... I HAD THE FRONT WHEELS NOSED INTO THE CURB, AND THE GEAR WAS IN REVERSE! QUESTION IS, **WHO'D DELIBERATELY DO A THING LIKE THAT?**

ONLY SOMEONE UNCONTROLLABLY WILD! SOMEONE **DIFFERENT** FROM US!

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT SOME ACCIDENT OCCURRED! ALWAYS IT WAS SOMETHING THAT MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED DELIBERATELY... AND HORACE VAIL CONTINUED DIRECTING SUSPICION AT NARDO...



NARDO? MAYBE, BUT HE SEEMS LIKE SUCH A DECENT GUY!

I TOLD YOU THIS TOWN'D BE SORRY! FOLKS HAD BETTER WAKE UP BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

THERE WAS GREAT CONSTERNATION IN TOWN THAT DAY! AN EMERGENCY MEETING WAS CALLED FOR THE SAME NIGHT... BEFORE GOING TO IT, SHERIFF LESTER STOPPED OFF TO SEE NARDO...



**SOMEBODY** WRECKED THE DYNAMITE SHED OVER AT THE BARTLETT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, MADE OFF WITH ENOUGH NITROGLYCERIN TO BLOW UP A SQUARE BLOCK!

"**SOMEBODY!**" YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO WHO'S RESPONSIBLE!



NARDO, SOMEHOW I BELIEVE IN YOU! BUT THE PEOPLE WILL DEMAND YOUR ARREST!

I SWEAR I'M **INNOCENT** OF THESE CRIMES, SHERIFF! YOU CAN HELP ME...

THE TOWNSPEOPLE WERE IN AN UGLY MOOD WHEN THE SHERIFF ADDRESSED THEM LATER...



...AND SO ALL I ASK IS PATIENCE! I KNOW WHOM YOU SUSPECT, BUT SUSPICION ISN'T PROOF!

NARDO IS NOT A HUMAN! HE DOESN'T THINK AS WE DO! HE'S A WILD CREATURE FROM A WILD PLANET!

ONE MAN WAS NOT AT THAT TOWN MEETING... HORACE VAIL WAS PUTTING HIS FINAL VICIOUS PLAN TO WORK, ONE WHICH WOULD GET RID OF THE MARTIAN INTRUDER ONCE AND FOR ALL...



TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE STREAM-LINER CROSSES THIS TRESTLE! ENOUGH TIME FOR ME TO GET TO THAT MEETING...

SHERIFF LESTER HAD BEEN ARGUING WITH THE ANGRY CITIZENS FOR AN HOUR WHEN HORACE VAIL BURST IN ON THE MEETING...



I FOLLOWED NARDO TO THE RAILROAD TRESTLE! HE PUT SOMETHING IN A CAN ON THE TRACKS!

THE NITRO-GLYCERIN! THE EXPRESS WILL BE ALONG SOON! THAT TRAIN MUST BE STOPPED!

IT TOOK ME ALMOST TWENTY MINUTES TO DRIVE HERE! THE TRAIN IS DUE TO CROSS THAT TRESTLE IN LESS THAN TEN! IT'S TOO LATE! BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET NARDO!

YOU'RE RIGHT, MR. VAIL! COME ON, WE'LL GO TO HIS HOUSE!



THE ENRAGED TOWNSMEN WENT TO NARDO'S HOME... THERE WERE LIGHTS ON INSIDE... THEY SHOUTED FOR HIM TO COME OUT... SOMEONE DID COME OUT...



W-WHAT IS THIS?

A SHOWDOWN! YOU'VE ALL BEEN DRAWN INTO A ROTTEN SCHEME BY HORACE VAIL! I FOLLOWED HIM TONIGHT, SAW HIM PLANT THIS CAN ON THE RAILROAD TRESTLE!

IT'S A LIE! A FRAME-UP! NARDO MUST'VE PAID YOU PLENTY TO SIDE WITH HIM!

I HAVE PROOF YOU'RE THE LIAR, HORACE VAIL... PROOF THAT NOBODY BUT YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS CAN OF NITRO HAVING BEEN PLANTED ON THAT TRESTLE! NARDO AND I WORKED OUT A LITTLE TRAP FOR YOU!



SHERIFF LESTER POINTED TO HIS DOUBLE! THE PEOPLE STARED WITH AMAZEMENT AS THE "SHERIFF" WHO LED THEM THERE QUICKLY TOOK ON HIS REAL APPEARANCE OF THE MARTIAN CREATURE NARDO!



YOU KNOW I'VE BEEN WITH YOU THE LAST HOUR, SO I COULDN'T POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN AT THAT TRESTLE THIRTY MINUTES AGO! EVEN I CAN'T BE IN TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME!

YOU'RE LUCKY I RECOVERED THAT NITRO IN TIME, VAIL! YOU'VE A LOT TO ANSWER FOR, AND YOU'LL HAVE A LOT OF TIME IN PRISON TO THINK UP THE ANSWERS!